Well-prepared ensemble

MUSIC

By Our Music Critic

Vadya Laya Vrinda
Shanmukhananda

It was heartening to see a group of kid-percussionists on a platform performing in synchrony to orchestrated classical music beat. The venue and aegis was Shanmukhananda, and the performing unit, Vadya Laya Vrinda, Bombay, formed by mridangam teacher Ambalapuzha Nandakumar.

Ensemble music is the in thing today. Fusion of melody and rhythm as a performing format is catching up making for a variety of instrumentation. While several performers like Kunnakudi Mani have been inspired lately, it is not surprising that an energetic percussionist, Nandakumar, ventured into it, considering the number of youngsters under his tutelage whose talent is no kid-stuff but with promise too.

The ensemble was well-prepared and rehearsed. With versatile flautist P.A. Murthy, Veena Vidushi Laksha Bharadwaj and clear-toned violinist [illegible] Dixit, providing musical backdrop of Kritis with elegance, élan and swaras, the percussion 'buds' had quite an engaging time accompanying and their Thani came as a thundering finale.

The Thani was in itself an orchestration of laya [illegible] dovetailing Pancha Nadais. The instruments, Mridangam, Ghatam, Kanjira, Morsing and Konnakkol, joining the foray in solo, jodi, trio, quartet, 'converging' in sollus and arriving pat at Eduppu was an thrilling experience.

Each one of the mridangists, Shankar Lakshmanan, Chidambaram, Vivek and Vijay played exceptionally good, yet teenager Chidambaram should be marked out for his felicity of nada and sarvalaghu and the [illegible] Vijay for his prodigious clarity. Satyam's solo sound on Kanjira was a welcome sign. Pramod and Kumar wielded Ghatam with understanding. Vidya's Konnakkol and Gopalan's morsing provided a fixture for these 'instruments' which have very few takers.

The Ragam-Tanam-Pallavi session was however on [illegible] for others with youngsters merely following.